

Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA)

DOI-BLM-ID-I020-2014-0026-DNA

U.S. Department of the Interior

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

A. BLM Office: Pocatello Field Office

Lease/Serial/Case File No.

Proposed Action Title/Type: Pocatello Field Office Shrub Plantings 2014

Location of Proposed Action: Samaria: T. 16 So., R. 36 E., Sec. 16, SW1/4SW1/4
Maybe Fire: T. 7 So., R. 40 e., Sec. 32, NW1/4SE1/4
Blackrock: T. 7 So., R. 35 e., Sec. 13, N1/2 SE1/4 and SW1/4SE1/4
Soda Hills: T. 8 So., R. 40 e., Sec. 24 NE1/4(see attached maps)

Description of the Proposed Action:

Approximately 9000 sagebrush and bitterbrush seedlings (18 acres) would be planted at four different sites. Shrubs would be hand planted at the Samaria (3000 seedlings), Maybe Fire (1500 seedlings), and Blackrock (3000 seedlings) sites. Either hand planting or tractor planting would be used at the Soda Hills (1500 seedlings) site.

Seedlings would be hand planted at a density of approximately 500 per acre (9.3 foot by 9.3 foot spacing). If herbaceous vegetation is dense enough to preclude seedling establishment a 2 foot by 2 foot area would be scalped (down to mineral soil). If possible, 4 inch diameter augers would be used to drill a hole for each seedling. If enough soil cannot be obtained to properly plant the seedling an auxiliary hole would be drilled within the scalped area. If an auger could not be used (e.g., the area is too rocky) to plant seedlings, hoedads or planting bars would be used.

For machine planting, tractor drawn chisel plow would be used to create a furrow in the ground that is closed by 2 packing wheels, which compact the soil. Shrub seedlings would be placed in the furrow by hand prior to compaction by the wheels. This application would be used in soils with few large rocks and areas with gentle slopes. The disturbance created from the plow is 12 inches to 14 inches wide and 8 inches to 12 inches deep. Rows would be planted approximately 10 feet apart; seedlings within rows would be spaced approximately 8 feet apart.

Applicant (if any): Idaho Department of Fish & Game (IDFG)

B. Conformance with the Land Use Plan (LUP) and Consistency with Related Subordinate Implementation Plans

LUP Name: Pocatello Resource Management Plan (RMP). April 2012.

The proposed action is in conformance with the applicable LUPs because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions:

The following objectives pertaining to the proposed project are included in the Pocatello RMP:

Objective FW-1.1. Maintain and improve wildlife habitats to support IDFG management objectives.

The project would plant sagebrush seedlings to improve mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) in support of IDFG Mule Deer Initiative.

Action B-SS-1.2.3. Manage key habitat for a range of sagebrush canopy cover averaging 15 to 25 percent...

The project would help establish sagebrush on the site that was removed by wildfire.

The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decisions (objectives, terms, and conditions) and, if applicable, implementation plan decisions:

The Pocatello RMP specifically provides for improving and maintaining wildlife habitat. See previous section.

C. Identify the applicable NEPA document(s) and other related documents that cover the proposed action.

List by name and date all applicable NEPA documents that cover the proposed action.

Pocatello Restoration Planting, Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-ID-I020-2010-0015-EA

List by name and date other documentation relevant to the proposed action (e.g., source drinking water assessments, biological assessment, biological opinion, watershed assessment, allotment evaluation, rangeland health standards assessment and determinations, and monitoring reports).

No other relevant documents have been produced.

D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria

1. Is the current proposed action substantially the same action (or is a part of that action) as previously analyzed? Yes, the Pocatello Restoration Planting, Environmental Assessment (EA) proposed and assessed planting of shrubs in the Pocatello Field Office.

Documentation of answer and explanation: The Pocatello Restoration Planting Environmental Assessment assessed hand and machine planting of shrubs in upland habitat. The

EA also assessed preparing the planting site and accessing the planting site with four-wheel drive vehicles and all terrain vehicles to deliver crews and equipment to the planting sites.

2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the current proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, resource values, and circumstances? Yes, there are no new circumstances that would merit looking at additional alternatives.

Documentation of answer and explanation: Refer to the Pocatello Restoration Planting, Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-ID-I020-2010-0015

3. Is the existing analysis adequate and are the conclusions adequate in light of any new information or circumstances (including, for example, riparian proper functioning condition [PFC] reports; rangeland health standards assessments; Unified Watershed Assessment categorizations; inventory and monitoring data; most recent Fish and Wildlife Service lists of threatened, endangered, proposed, and candidate species; most recent BLM lists of sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that all new information and all new circumstances are insignificant with regard to analysis of the proposed action?

Yes, the existing analysis is adequate. There are no threatened or endangered species known to inhabit the project area. The wolverine (*Gulo gulo*) is a proposed species in Caribou County, but the project would not impact wolverine habitat. The greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) is a candidate species but the project would benefit sage-grouse by planting sagebrush in an area that has burned.

Documentation of answer and explanation: Species Report for Oneida, Caribou, and Bannock Counties in Idaho. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 20 March 2014.

4. Do the methodology and analytical approach used in the existing NEPA document(s) continue to be appropriate for the current proposed action? Yes, the proposed planting would have the same impacts as the “planting” methods analyzed in the Pocatello Restoration Planting EA.

Documentation of answer and explanation: Refer to the Pocatello Restoration Planting, Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-ID-I020-2010-0015

5. Are the direct and indirect impacts of the current proposed action substantially unchanged from those identified in the existing NEPA document(s)? Does the existing NEPA document sufficiently analyze site-specific impacts related to the current proposed action? Yes, the Pocatello Restoration Planting EA assessed the impacts of planting on a variety of resources in the Field Office and those impacts on the proposed planting sites would be no different.

Documentation of answer and explanation: Refer to the Pocatello Restoration Planting, Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-ID-I020-2010-0015

6. Can you conclude without additional analysis or information that the cumulative impacts that would result from implementation of the current proposed action are substantially unchanged from those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? Yes, the FONSI determined that there are no significant impacts to the environment from this type of project.

Documentation of answer and explanation: Refer to the Pocatello Restoration Planting, Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-ID-I020-2010-0015

7. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current proposed action? Yes, there is nothing unique about the proposed plantings that wasn't adequately covered in the Pocatello Restoration Planting EA

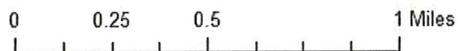
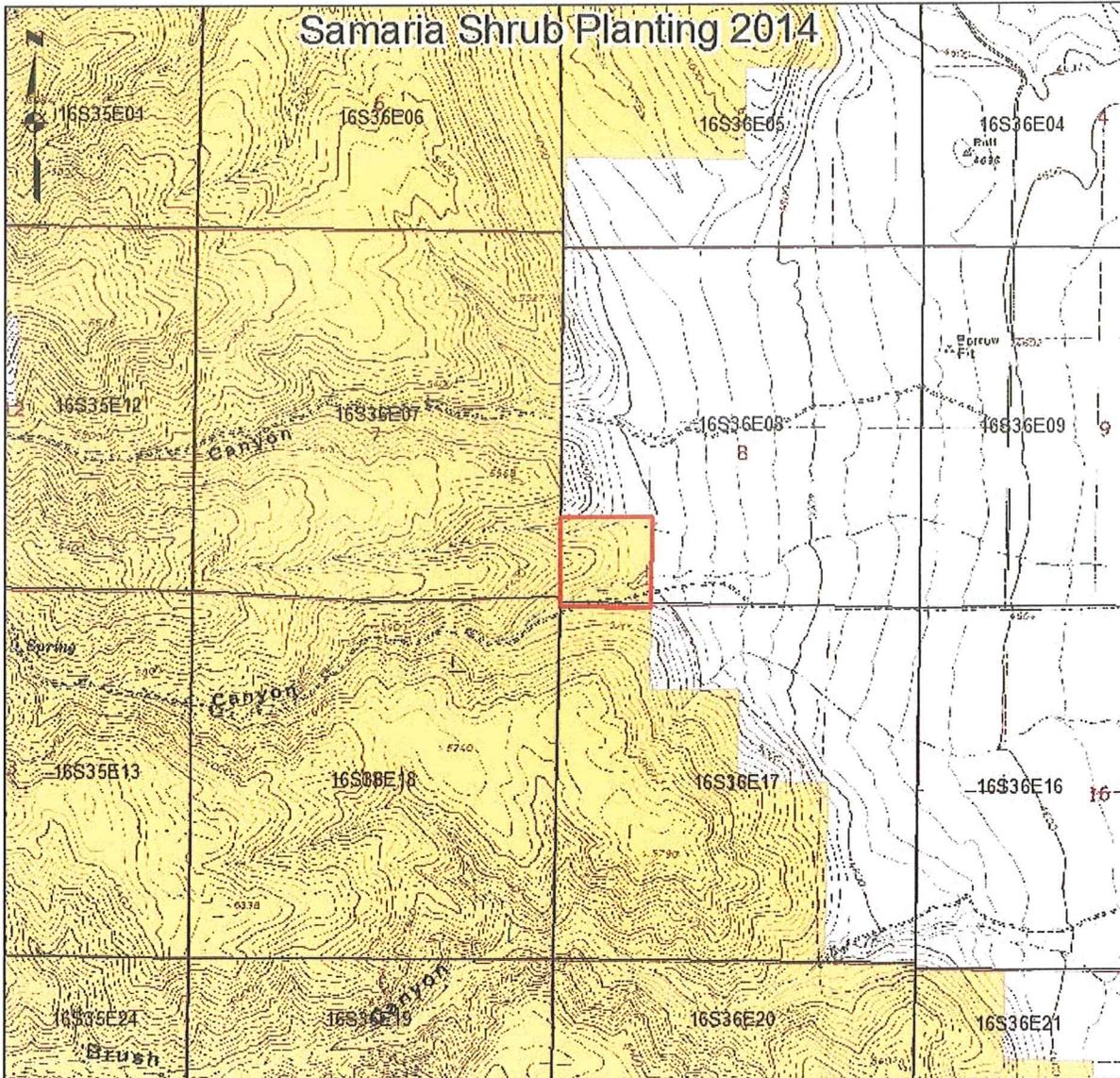
Documentation of answer and explanation: Refer to the Pocatello Restoration Planting, Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-ID-I020-2010-0015

E. Interdisciplinary Analysis: Identify those team members conducting or participating in the preparation of this worksheet.

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Title</u> | <u>Resource Represented</u> |
|----------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Amy Lapp | Archaeologist | Cultural Resources |
| Eric Limbach | Rangeland Management Specialist | Range |
| Paul Wackenhut | Habitat Biologist, IDGF | Wildlife |
| Karen Kraus | Range Technician | Botany, Wildfire Rehabilitation |

F. Mitigation Measures: List any applicable mitigation measures that were identified, analyzed, and approved in relevant LUPs and existing NEPA document(s). List the specific mitigation measures or identify an attachment that includes those specific mitigation measures. Document that these applicable mitigation measures must be incorporated and implemented.

To avoid the spread of noxious weeds, no cross country vehicular travel would occur in areas with known noxious weed infestations. Furthermore, any noxious weeds discovered during treatment or during post-treatment monitoring would be treated consistent with the Upper Snake-Pocatello Integrated Weed Control Program Programmatic Environmental Assessment (ID-310-2008-EA-43).



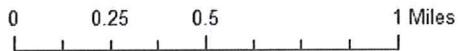
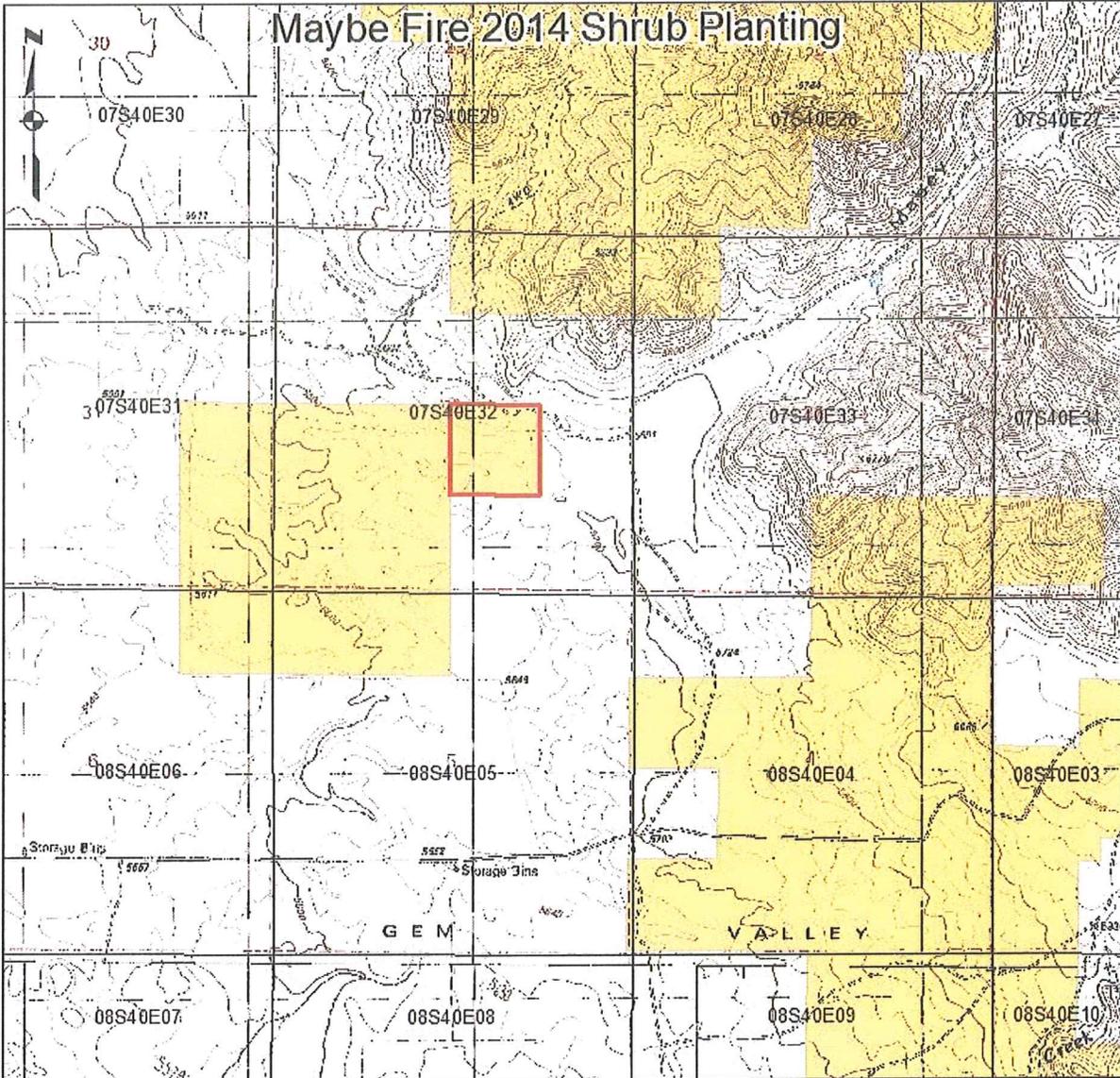
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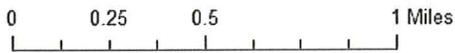
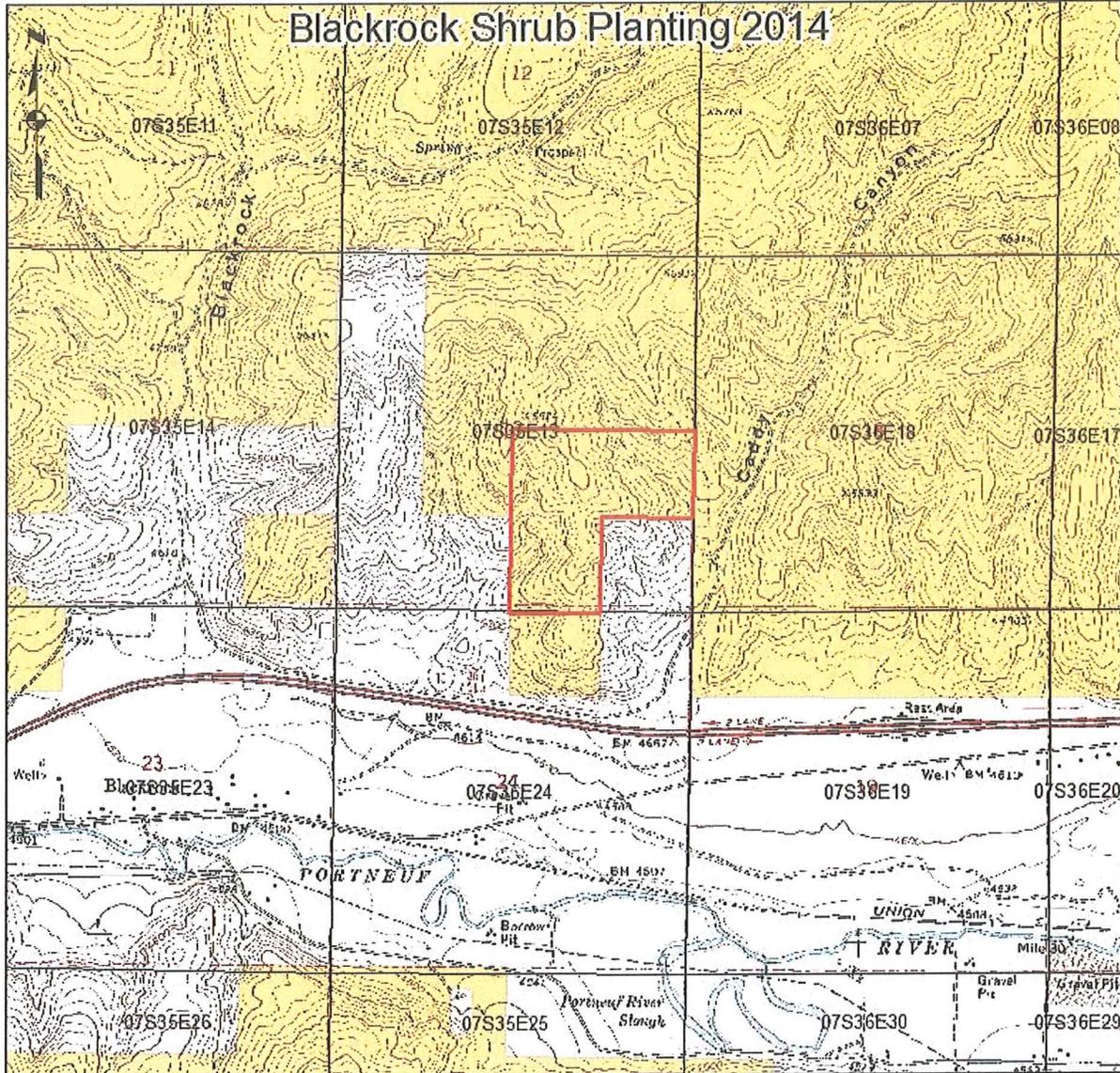
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Blackrock Shrub Planting 2014



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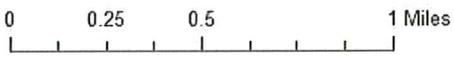
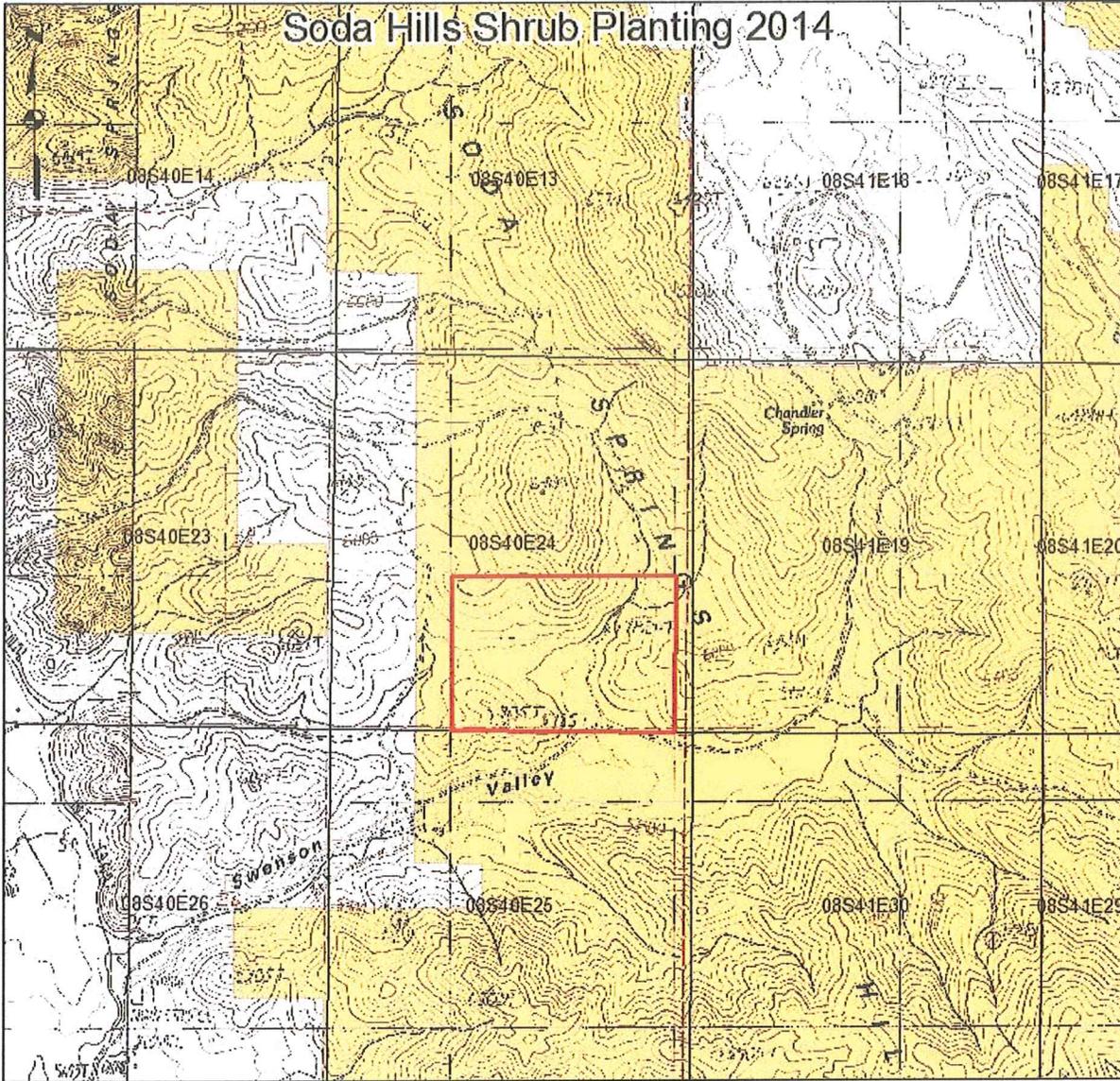
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Soda Hills Shrub Planting 2014



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